

REMARKS

Claims 5-35 are pending in this application, of which claims 5, 16, and 26 are amended herein. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action is respectfully requested.

The Office has objected to the Specification by stating that the continuity data appears to be incorrect. Applicants hereby confirm that this application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/364,046, which was filed July 30, 1999, and is now abandoned.

The continuity data in this application was initially amended in Applicants' Amendment filed April 21, 2003 to correct a typographical error in the originally filed application, and was revised in Applicants' Amendment After Final filed January 10, 2004 to reflect the abandoned status of the '046 application.

Applicants respectfully direct the Office's attention to the Remarks on page 5 of the Amendment filed by Applicants on April 21, 2003 which clearly state that the originally filed Specification erroneously stated that this application was a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/365,243, that the correct parent application is the '046 application as set forth in the originally filed Declaration, that the '046 application has at least one common inventor with the above-identified application, and that the '046 application was pending at the time the above-identified application was filed. Accordingly, by referencing the '046 application, this application is correctly referencing the application upon which benefit under §120 was and is intended to be claimed as discussed above. Applicants hereby renew their request that the Office acknowledge the granting of priority for the above-identified application under §120 to the '046 application.

In addition, the Office has rejected claims 5-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,301,462 to Freeman et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,195,687 to Greaves et al. and U.S. Patent No. 6,196,846 to Berger et al. In particular, the Office asserts that Freeman teaches at least one client that provides control data from at least one of the plurality of clients, the control data associated with tasks to be performed for a training exercise (col. 2, line 63, to col. 3, line 3), a device management system that provides low-level commands for the electronic training devices based on the control data from the at

least one client to implement functions that change a configuration of the electronic devices (col. 5, lines 42-61, col. 6, lines 25-34, and col. 9, lines 19-24), and a control system configured to access a first set of two or more of the electronic training devices based upon one or more requirements of the training exercise, the control system manipulating the first set of the electronic training devices according to the control data using the low-level commands provided by the device management system to perform portions of the training exercise. (col. 5, lines 42-61 and col. 6, lines 25-34).

The Office correctly states that Freeman fails to disclose wherein the changed configuration results in manipulating fundamental operations of the electronic training devices that the electronic training devices are originally configured to perform. Accordingly, the Office asserts that Greaves teaches these features at col. 2, lines 15-36, and col. 3, line 22-35.

Also, the Office correctly states that Freeman fails to disclose a mentor system that monitors the control data from the client, wherein the mentor system can control the control data from the at least one client. Accordingly, the Office asserts that Berger teaches these features at col. 2, lines 26-43.

However, none of Freeman, Greaves, and Berger, taken alone or in combination, disclose, suggest, or render obvious “a device management system that *initiates communication with the electronic training devices* and provides low-level commands to the electronic training devices based on the control data to implement functions that change a configuration of the electronic training devices, wherein the changed configuration results in *actual manipulation* of fundamental operations of the electronic training devices that the electronic training devices are originally configured to perform” as recited in claim 5 or a method or medium comprising “*initiating, with a device management system, communication with the electronic training devices*” and “providing, with the device management system, low-level commands for the electronic training devices based on the control data to implement functions that change a configuration of the electronic training devices, wherein the changed configuration results in *actual manipulation* of fundamental operations of the electronic training devices that the electronic training devices are originally configured to perform” as recited in claims 16 and 26.

Rather, Freeman specifically teaches that online modules may be used as a resource for the user, for example, to “present learners with tasks to enhance the acquisition of skills and knowledge” (col. 6, lines 25-34), and that the “software can also permit the learner to perform a task online and evaluate the online task, responding to frequently made mistakes. (col. 2, line 64, to col. 3, line 3). However, Freeman fails to disclose or suggest that the online components of the training system are capable of *initiating communication with electronic training devices* and providing low-level commands to the electronic training devices based on the control data to implement functions that change a configuration of the electronic training devices, wherein the changed configuration results in *actual manipulation of fundamental operations of the electronic training devices* that the electronic training devices are originally configured to perform, as is recited in the claims.

Similarly, Greaves specifically teaches away from the master control node having the ability to initiate communication with the slave control node. In particular, Greaves requires that “at each slave client node, a slave node control module *must be invoked* which can receive communication from the master control node, acknowledge communication from the master node, shut down an application or application feature on the slave node in an orderly manner, and control invocation of any program, service or driver at the slave node, or it can configure the slave node for a specific application or environment. (col. 2, lines 29-26). Without the slave client node first invoking communication, the master control node will not accept the slave node on the network. (col. 1, lines 62-67). Thus, Greaves also fails to disclose or suggest that the master control node is capable of *initiating communication with electronic training devices* and providing low-level commands to the electronic training devices based on the control data to implement functions that change a configuration of the electronic training devices, wherein the changed configuration results in *actual manipulation of fundamental operations of the electronic training devices* that the electronic training devices are originally configured to perform, as is recited in the claims.

Moreover, Berger discloses a remote control session wherein the instructor may operate the customer workstation to train the user on how to perform various tasks within the specified computer program. (col. 2, line 26-43). However, there is no suggestion whatsoever in Berger that the instructor is capable of initiating communication with electronic training devices and providing low-level commands to the electronic training

devices based on the control data to implement functions that *change a configuration of the electronic training devices, wherein the changed configuration results in actual manipulation of fundamental operations of the electronic training devices that the electronic training devices are originally configured to perform*, as is recited in the claims.

In contrast, the present invention enables users to *actually* control low-level functions of devices to actually change the devices' configurations during training exercises, as disclosed at page 10, lines 3-21 through page 11, line 11 in the above-identified application. Further, the system can change the configuration of the user devices 314 depending on the user's actions during a training exercise whereas other systems, such as Freeman, simply have clients that interact with servers only in the manner the servers are programmed to behave. Another example is provided at page 14, lines 13-16 in the above-identified application, where the electronic training devices may comprise mechanical shuttles that can *actually* move a beaker to different locations, for example, during a training exercise, such as a chemistry lab. Referring now to page 9, lines 16-17 in the above-identified application, allowing devices to be controlled for assignments enables embodiments of the invention to replicate real-world scenarios that other systems, such as those described by Freeman, Greaves, and Berger, simply cannot.

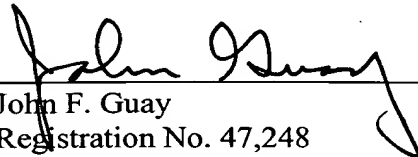
Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections of claims 5, 16, and 26. The dependent claims are allowable by virtue of their dependency and also on their own merits.

The present amendment is submitted in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116, which after Final Rejection permits entry of amendments placing the claims in better form for consideration on appeal. As the present amendment is believed to overcome outstanding rejections, the present amendment places the application in better form for consideration on appeal. It is therefore respectfully requested that 37 C.F.R. §1.116 be liberally construed, and that the present amendment be entered.

In view of all of the foregoing, Applicants submit that this case is in condition for allowance and such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 10, 2005



John F. Guay
Registration No. 47,248

NIXON PEABODY LLP
c/o Gunnar G. Leinberg, Registration No. 35,584
Clinton Square, P.O. Box 31051
Rochester, New York 14603-1051
Telephone: (585) 263-1014
Facsimile: (585) 263-1600